

# Town of Blue Hill, Maine

**SELECTMEN/ASSESSORS**

JOHN R. BANNISTER  
JAMES M. SCHATZ  
DUANE B. GRAY

FIRST SETTLED 1762

INCORPORATED JAN. 30, 1789

**OVERSEERS OF POOR**

JOHN R. BANNISTER  
JAMES M. SCHATZ  
DUANE B. GRAY

SELECTMEN IN OFFICE  
FRIDAY AFTERNOONS  
P.O. Box 412  
Blue Hill, Maine 04614

**ASSESSORS' AGENTS**

R. J. D. APPRAISALS

**TREASURER/ADMIN. ASST.**

ANN STADDEN

**TAX COLLECTOR**

ETTA PERKINS

**TOWN CLERK**

ETTA PERKINS

**ROAD COMMISSIONER**

DAVID M. COUSINS

**FIRE CHIEF**

DENNIS ROBERTSON

## BLUE HILL, MAINE

January 25, 2010

Dear ConnectME Authority representatives,

The Town of Blue Hill, Maine is requesting a ConnectME grant to help fund a project that will bring broadband internet service to East Blue Hill, a significant unserved area located between greater Blue Hill and Surry.

### Description of unserved area and communications with providers

Broadband service is currently available outside the borders of East Blue Hill (EBH) in both directions, with both Time Warner Cable and FairPoint providing service to greater Blue Hill residents (west of EBH) and to Surry residents (north and east of EBH). A geographic conundrum has prevented FairPoint from expanding services into EBH: there are a few miles of dense woods west of EBH (between EBH and greater Blue Hill), which make it unappealing to run cable there; it makes more sense to expand service from the other direction (north and east of EBH), along the Morgan Bay Rd, but this is not possible because FairPoint cannot extend service across town lines. At a meeting organized by the Blue Hill Selectmen in July 2009, FairPoint stated that it has no near-term plans to expand service to this area.

In the summer of 2009, the Town began communicating with Time Warner Cable (TWC), which in the past has considered and rejected expanding service into EBH because the area did not meet the density requirement as outlined in the franchise agreement with the town. TWC had also referred to the same above issue of unfeasibility of running cable through the unpopulated area between greater Blue Hill and EBH. However, in response to significant demand from EBH residents, TWC agreed to perform a more detailed site survey of the area and to help the town consider creative solutions to meeting the demonstrated need.

In October 2009, the Town of Blue Hill became aware of grant opportunities through the Connect ME Authority and approached TWC as a potential partner to extend services to EBH. The project proposal comprises two creative elements: 1) a partnership between Blue Hill town and TWC, with TWC committing to fund a cost per passing (not yet determined) and Blue Hill seeking grant funding for as much of the remaining amount as possible, and 2) a design to expand service into EBH via Morgan Bay Rd, crossing over the Surry town line, which is less expensive and targets the area more effectively than the traditional approach of expansion only from within town boundaries.

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## BLUE HILL, MAINE

### Project Details

The Town of Blue Hill is seeking funding for this TWC proposed build-out, which will cover 6.16 miles and offer broadband access to 119 homes. Almost 100% of these homes are unserved, except for an estimated three homes that are just on the edge of the service area available through Premium Choice (wireless broadband). The build-out includes all of the major EBH roadways (Morgan Bay Rd, Curtis Cove Rd, and Jay Carter Rd) as well as a majority of side roads. Households with long driveways not included in the build-out plan will have the ability to get service if they pay for the cost of extending the cable up their roads. In sum, this plan offers cable-ready access to over 90% of EBH homes, with access available at an additional cost to the remaining homes in the area.

The estimated project cost is \$146,586. Our grant request from ConnectME is for \$73,293, which represents 50% of the project cost. TWC will cover a percentage of the cost, which at this time has yet to be determined. It will likely be calculated as a cost per passing based on the projected number of customers in the area. Residents in the area are currently working to gather this information. Based on the high demand for access, the current unavailability of service in the area, and the individual testimonials they have received to-date, these residents predict that a high percentage of households will become customers.

The technology will consist of a hybrid fiber co-ax infrastructure consistent with TWC's cable plant throughout the State. The build includes fiber connection from existing fiber termination to a distribution node location. Distribution includes Co-ax Hard-line along pole lines to distribution tap locations. Distribution tap location is the take-off point to the home from the roadway. Rg-6, Rg-7, Rg-11 Co-ax drop cable will be used to connect the home to the distribution tap.

TWC will apply for all applicable pole permits and applications no later than thirty (30) days from the day notice is received regarding grant award and will complete the project within six (6) months of receipt of required approvals and completion of make-ready. It is anticipated that make-ready by pole owners will take approximately seven (7) months. Broadband services and speeds that will be available are listed below:

RoadRunner Lite - Download 765 kbps/ Upload 128KBPS

Road Runner Basic - 1.5Mb Download, 256kbps Upload

Road Runner Standard - 8Mb Download/ 512k Upload (speeds will be increasing to 10Mb X 1 MB in 2010)

Road Runner Turbo - 15Mb Download/ 1Mb Upload

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## BLUE HILL, MAINE

TWC was recently approached to partner with the Town of Edgecomb to implement a ConnectME-funded project and has participated in a timely and responsive manner. This example gives the Town of Blue Hill confidence that this type of partnership offers a successful approach to providing access to a significant unserved area such as EBH.

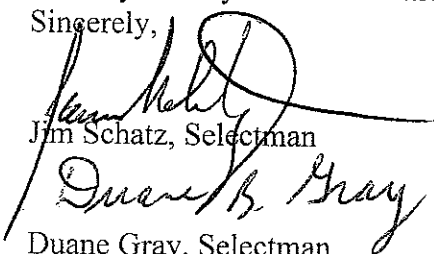
### Community Support

The EBH community has been anxiously awaiting access to broadband internet, and cable infrastructure provided by TWC is an effective way to meet the needs of a geographical area of this size. Support for the project has taken several forms, including: multiple service requests initially to TWC's call center, before this partnership was formed; a sample list of interested households gathered informally by an EBH resident and submitted to the Town; email messages from a number of residents expressing enthusiasm at the possibility of TWC service; and testimonials from EBH residents citing economic or educational disadvantages experienced resulting from a lack of high-speed internet access.

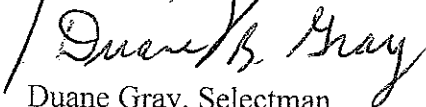
Funding from the ConnectME program will allow us to take advantage of this unique opportunity to partner with Time Warner Cable in order to provide high-quality, reliable broadband internet access for the unserved East Blue Hill area.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jim Schatz, Selectman



Duane Gray, Selectman



John Bannister, Selectman